

INTOUCH

Newsletter of the Shaftesbury and Gillingham U3A

Dear All,

Well, a bit earlier than you have been used to, but here is the September edition of "In Touch", with thanks to Bill McIntyre for all his hard work.

It is all change this month! We meet from now on, on the first Thursday on each month, which just happens to be 1st September! The timings remain unchanged. 10.00am for coffee, followed at 10.30am by the more formal part of the meeting. There is also the change of venue; we will be at the New Remembrance hall, Charlton.

Looking back, this has been a mobile year! Our move to Charlton is the third venue in 12 months, but hopefully we will be there for some time to come. Thankfully we have a good range of speakers, organized by Libby Hague Holmes: many thanks for all your hard work, Libby. It is much appreciated.

I am looking forward to seeing you all at the new venue on 1st September. In the meantime, I do hope you are making the most of the cooler weather. I am, as I do not cope at all well with high temperatures!

Liz Greenway Chairman.

SGU3A Groups

This month's edition of IN TOUCH concentrates on our groups and includes a list of all groups with details of venues and the day(s) when the meetings take place. Group Leaders can be contacted via the website. I propose to keep this as a standard entry in each monthly edition but this month I asked each Group Leader to provide me with some additional information on their activities. You may find you were totally unaware of some events and perhaps wish to extend your 3rd age learning. Additionally you may care to keep this edition to one side to show any friends who may be potential new members of SGU3A.

Bill McIntyre

Speaker for Thursday 1 September

Susan Brattin

A Horrible History of Scotland

Susan was born in Edinburgh and always found history an interesting subject with the Castle and the Palace on her doorstep. She studied at Edinburgh university for an MA which included one year of Scottish history and one year of European history. Susan is also an author of "Stow-on-the-Wold War Memorial" which is a history of the memorial and in memory of the men who died in WW1 and WW2.

This talk is called A Horrible History of Scotland as some of the details are rather gruesome. It is about the Stuart kings and queen in the 200 year period prior to the union of the crowns in 1603.

CURRENT GROUPS

All leaders can be contacted via the website

Group	Meetings	Leader
Art Appreciation	1 st & 3 rd Thursday Afternoon	Barbara Hurst
Canasta	1 st & 3 rd Monday Morning	Hazel Baker
Digital Photography	3 rd Thursday Morning	Andy Newton
Embroidery	3 rd Wednesday Afternoon	Lesley Frost
French for Fun	Tuesday Alt Weeks Morning	Ron Beard
Garden Interest	2 nd Monday Morning	Jan Skelton
Genealogy	4 th Monday Afternoon	Liz Greenway
German Conversation	Wednesday Alt Weeks Afternoon	Robert Light
International History	3 rd Wednesday Morning	Richard Sims
Literature	1 st & 3 rd Monday Morning	Peter Rolfe
Mah Jong	2 nd & 4 th Friday Afternoon	Marion Pace
Music for Pleasure	2 nd & 4 th Thursday Afternoon	Patricia Lawford
Natural History	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday Morning	Marion Hammond
Philosophy	Arranged by agreement	Chris Spencer
Poetry & Play Reading	1 st Thursday Afternoon	Audrey Cross
Rummicub	Weekly Tuesday Afternoon	Avril Fletcher
Scrabble	Weekly Friday Morning	Yvonne Hill
Spite and Malice	3 rd Thursday Afternoon	Sue Walker
Table Tennis	Weekly Thursday Afternoon	Elizabeth Lewer Joint Leader
Table Tennis		Chris Stotesbury Joint Leader
Walking	1 st Tuesday Morning	Barbara Robson

Art Appreciation Group

Great news! The new art appreciation group will meet on the first and third Thursdays of each month, from 1.00pm till 2.30pm, in The Brook room at Fern Brook Lodge, Fern Brook Lane, Gillingham SP8 4QD.

There is some parking on site, and also street parking, but please ride-share where possible. If anyone from Gillingham would like a lift, I'm happy to pick you up and drop you off.

In the first session, we will be sharing our favourite artworks and talking about what it is that excites and interests us. You can bring along your choices on memory sticks, as photocopies or in books. Or you can provide me with details, and I will download your choices onto my memory stick. Art is incredibly subjective and I'm sure it will be very interesting to see the range of work you share.

We shall also consider the topic of our next few meetings. It could be a theme, such as weather or animals; a genre, such as portraiture, landscape or still life; a movement, such as the Renaissance, Romanticism or Impressionism; the art of a particular country; or the work of a particular artist. Please give this some thought, so we can hopefully find consensus on a topic that will appeal to the majority.

If you have any questions, do please get in touch.

Barbara Hurst
01747 825646

Quiz Evening

As mentioned in the July In Touch Shaftesbury and District Trefoil Guild would like to invite sgu3a members to their quiz on Tuesday 11th October at 7pm at Shaftesbury Guide Hall, Lindlar Close, Wincombe Lane, Shaftesbury SP7 8PS. Tickets are £6 per person (teams of 6) and light refreshment is included. For further details please email Sheena, <shreenacommons@btinternet.com> with the subject Trefoil Quiz, She will then send the 'official invitation' via email and you can respond accordingly so we know how many to cater for. If you are technophobic, or don't have internet facilities please feel free to phone me and we will do it another way. Lesley 853375. We will need to know numbers before the end of September. Thank you All.

Lesley Frost

International History

The International History group is now entering its tenth year and has reverted to meeting once a month, at 10.30 on the third Wednesday. Between 2018 and 2020 there were actually two groups, but because of the pandemic we switched to meeting on Zoom and those who continued to be members (about twelve) amalgamated. For several reasons we continue to meet on Zoom despite its obvious drawbacks. We have continued to range widely in the topics we cover, and in the last two years these have included Latin America, Afghanistan, Sweden, Eastern Europe, and Western Europe since the early sixteenth century. We have now reached the First World War (some aspects of which we previously discussed back in 2014). I normally send members links to relevant videos (which usually means about two hours' viewing) the week before the meeting. We could accommodate one or two new members if anyone is interested.

Richard Sims

More French for Fun?

Our French for Fun group has been fully subscribed for some time, which has meant that some members have been unable to join. Obviously, we don't like our members to be disappointed, so I'm exploring the possibility of creating a second French for Fun group. If you would be interested, please let me know. I would especially like to hear from anyone who might consider becoming its leader. I can help with a venue, resources and advice from people who have led similar groups in the past.

Barbara Hurst Groups Coordinator

barbara@pbhurst.com 01747 825646

Genealogy group.

More often known as "genies", this is one of the longest running groups in sgu3a. Currently we meet about 6 times a year and have no waiting list. We have been meeting in members' homes and also at Shaftesbury museum.

What do we do? We are all involved and interested in researching family history. Some are at the beginning of their family history journey, others are further along their journey. We share stories of our research, look at various aspects of family history and resources available, and help each other over "brick walls" in research!

Liz Greenway

Scrabble Group

We are a small, friendly group of Scrabble lovers, of various skill levels. We play 2 or 3 light-hearted games in 2 hours, in teams of 2 or 3, depending on attendance.



We're very relaxed with a laid-back approach. Dictionaries and electronic aids are permitted, to verify words.

We meet on Friday mornings at The Slade, The Square, Gillingham, our chosen venue, where we get an excellent coffee. They also do wonderful cakes, though we usually resist the temptation.

There is a charge of £10 for the use of the room every week which we share between us.

We always welcome new members, so would love to see you. Please come and give us a try.

Yvonne Hill

Spite and Malice

This group of card players has now been running for a few years, and new members are discovering the joy of friendly hostility.

S&M can be played online, and some of our newer members have played when abroad.

One of its joys is that it can be played by two, three or four people, and all that is required is a pack of cards per person, table(s), and of course, cake!

So the group can welcome more members, and the various permutations of players mean that players can mix and chat.

It is not played quietly or reverently.

It may be that another group could form, but at present new members are welcome

The rules have been tweaked a little, so they differ slightly from the rules found online.

Sue Walker

The Literature Group.

'There are currently 14 of us who meet on the first and third Mondays of the month at 10.30 till about midday. We meet on Zoom only, so there is always room for one or two newcomers. If you're interested, please first phone me on 01747 852744 to hear what we do in more detail.

'We study 'literature in English' so sometimes we do foreign works in translation. Mostly, though, it is classical English texts. We usually do one Shakespeare play a year - our next one is 'The Taming of the Shrew', which should lead to some interesting discussion! We've just finished 'Cannery Row' by Steinbeck, before that a novel by Balzac and several sessions enjoying nature poetry. Over the years since the founding of the S&GU3A we've studied a huge range of literature from the very earliest to the nearly contemporary.

'We read the books together and there is always lively discussion. We try to discuss books in depth but we are very welcoming, not at all intimidating and it doesn't matter what your experience of literature has been before joining us. All you need is a love of reading, regular attendance and a willingness to express your opinion. An open mind helps because we don't always agree in our responses.'

Peter Rolfe

Rummicub

Our Rummicub Group is at full capacity and very popular. It's a very sociable and enjoyable game that keeps the brain active, and I'm looking into the possibility of forming another group. If this sounds like the sort of fun activity you might enjoy, please let me know. I can help with a suitable venue.

Barbara Hurst Groups Coordinator

barbara@pbhurst.com 01747 825646

Walking Group

We meet in the morning on the 1st Tuesday of the month for a walk of around 4-5 miles

We rather like hills - for me, a good view is an essential for a satisfactory walk! Memorable outings recently have included a visit to Win Green (which turned out to be longer than planned, at over 6 miles...), Oysters Coppice in Semley and the woods above it for glorious bluebells and spring flowers, Hod Hill, Melbury Woods, Hindon and Mere Downs

Walks are followed by an optional lunch at a suitable hostelry, with time to chat and enjoy each other's company- it's a pretty sociable group!

Members are encouraged to take a turn leading a walk, though this is totally optional, and I am always happy to walk try-outs with people who are a bit uncertain about it

Autumn is a lovely time to be out and about in our glorious countryside, and new members who can comfortably walk 5 miles at a reasonable pace are welcome to join us

Barbara Robson

A Strollers Walking Group

I understand there may be a need for a less strenuous walking group to accommodate those of us who are slowing down a bit. We could perhaps call it Strollers. If that is something you would be interested in, particularly if you would consider leading it, please let me know.

Barbara Hurst Groups Coordinator
barbara@pbhurst.com 01747 825646

New Philosophy Group

The leader is Chris Spencer:
chrisandsue.spencer@btinternet.com
We meet monthly, and at that meeting decide the date and topic to be discussed on the following meeting. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 20 September at 2pm This month's topic is "What is civilisation?"

Previous meetings have discussed:
"Is there such a thing as a Just War?"
"What is the value of Art?"
"What is the role of government?"

Members are expected to contribute their own thoughts on the subject. These will be discussed openly, analysing in some depth the points made. Discussions will be respectful, but critical.

Gillingham Town Fete

July 16th saw SGU3A having a display stand at the Gillingham Town Fete. We had documents showing the aims of the organisation, what we do and listing the various groups.



Several people mentioned an interest in Art related activities and you will see from elsewhere in the newsletter that a new Art Appreciation group will shortly be starting. We hope to have gained a few new members from those who stopped for a chat. Many thanks to the volunteers who manned the stand on what was a very hot day - Barbara Robson, Merle Upshall, Sheila Handibode and Anne Bradbury. Also thanks to committee members Libby Hague-Holmes, Peter Grange, Bill McIntyre and Barbara Hurst.

Membership Cards at General Meetings

Starting with the General Meeting on September 1st we plan to scan membership cards on entry to the hall. This is for these reasons:

- To speed up the entrance to the hall. Currently it is taking some while for people to find their name on the member list in order to "check in".
- To provide a list of who is in the hall in the event of an emergency
- To better provide attendance statistics.

As this is a new system, it will still be possible to sign in on paper if you forget your card, but obviously we are hoping as many people as possible will have a card with them. It reduces the paperwork for the committee! It can be a card posted to you or one you printed yourself from our email or one you are able to display on your phone/tablet or other electronic device.

Proposed Shaftesbury & Gillingham U3A Lunch Group

A lunch group is proposed which will meet once a month at 12.30 in changing local establishments.

It will be a chance for members to meet new people, try new cuisines and have a day off cooking!

Members will be encouraged not to sit with their 'friends' but to regularly sit with different people, learn new things about the U3A and area and to try a variety of cuisines suggested by the group membership. Some choices might not suit everyone but a variety of cuisines will keep us all 'up to date'! 10-12 is probably the maximum membership for the group so we can all sit at one table in most places.

If you are interested and have a preferred day of the week to meet - Friday looks to be the best day looking at the Groups list, please let me know.

Ros Ham Email: rosalind.ham@talk21.com

Natural History Group

This spring and summer the Natural History Group have enjoyed some delightful visits to nature reserves around our local area - nearby



Dorset, Wiltshire and Somerset. There have been glorious meadows, with a wealth of wildflowers and beautiful butterflies. Shady woodland and waterside sites have been much valued in the hot weather.

Hardington Moor

The highlights have included identifying seven different

species of orchid on two Somerset reserves, hearing Skylarks and Meadow Pipits singing over White Sheet Down and watching dragonflies and damselflies around the Langford Lakes - whilst enjoying coffee and cake in the new lakeside café!

We are a long-established friendly group which welcomes new members. We love sharing our interests in wildlife and learning new things together.

Marion Hammond

Promoting SGU3A

As you will have seen from the previous page SGU3A recently participated in the Gillingham Town Fete, where there was considerable interest in our activities. We hope to find more opportunities to promote SGU3A at community events such as this and need to create eye-catching display boards to attract new members and I have undertaken this task. You will see from the picture in the article that our board looks a bit sparse and I'm looking for witty, quirky, interesting material to show all aspects of what we do, the serious and the not-so-serious.

I'd be grateful for any photos that might fit the bill, especially if they are from unusual viewpoints or show an unexpected aspect of U3A. If you don't have anything suitable at the moment, remember to take your camera along to forthcoming meetings.

I would also like to challenge our more artistic members to represent their groups in creative ways: paintings, cartoons, graphic design etc. The aim is to appeal to younger people, so I'm really looking for the 'wow' factor. Are you up for that challenge?

Please send me your contributions via email if suitable: barbara@pbhurst.com or call me to arrange collection: 01747 825646.

And please also notify me of any community events where we can promote SGU3A.

Barbara Hurst
Groups Coordinator

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The next edition of *In Touch* will be published in October. Deadline for submissions is 23rd September 2022.

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Remember you can view a copy of this NEWSLETTER on our web page at:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/squ3a/home>